1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

161 enumeration of the population. My process was to get together several
124 of the most intelligent and well-informed men in the district; cause them
to compare notes and then to tie a series of knots in strings as they are
[211] accustomed to do; different kinds of knots distinguishing the sexes. Each
house was counted separately, so that I obtained an exact census of the
whole country with the following results. This cord census is now in the
museum of the Smithsonian Institution, with many other articles, illus-
trating the life and customs of the people.

[162] The population of each district is as follows:

Tiribi	103
Uren	604
Bri-bri	172
Cabecar	128
The Valley	219
Total	1226

This covers all of the water-sheds of the Tilorio and Tiliri rivers ex-
cept two small bands; the Changinas on the Changina branch of the
Tilorio and a refugee remnant of the Cabecars on the extreme head of
the Tiliri. Probably an additional hundred would cover all of these.

On the North or Estrella river, and on the Chiripo, there are a few
more Cabecars who have little communication with the headquarters of
the tribe, but who are in the habit of going out to Limon or Matina for
what little trade they require. These are probably in all, not more than
200 or 300 in number. Nearly all speak Spanish and they are gradually
approximating to civilized or semi-civilized ways.

[461] The cause of the rapid decrease in the population is their extreme in-
146 dolence. With a country fitted to produce all the fruits of the tropics;
262 where maize grows luxuriantly, and where cattle and pigs increase with-
out care or labor; they are content to make plantains their staple, and
almost their only food. Chicha the form in which most of their maize
[273] is used, is a beverage very slightly intoxicating, if drank in large quanti-
ties, but the amount of nutriment derived from it is unimportant. Meat,
whether of domestic or wild animals, is a rarity and a luxury, and the
banana or plantain make up all deficiencies. The natural consequence
of a bulky and comparatively innutritious diet is a low physical state.
147 The system has little resisting power against disease, or healing power
164 over wounds. A slight attack of coast fever, which, with an ordinary
strong man of our own race, would be comparatively harmless, is very
apt to terminate fatally with these people. Indolent ulcers are so com-
mon that perhaps a full fourth of not only adults, but even children
have them, usually on the legs, originating in some slight scratch or
bruise; and very few of the elderly persons are without their scars.
These ulcers often last for years, and I have seen them as broad as the
165 two hands opened side by side. Although the local diseases are few, the
entire absence of medical treatment, the ignorance of the first principles